

Ice Curtain: The End of Victory
A Proposal for a Monument to Cold War Victory by DM³, 2012-2014.

The Cold War's victory lies in its ghostly perpetuity throughout society. Its revanchism emerges in paranoid bodies, furtive double takes on crevasses of public space, and fears of fallout burning one's insides. Augmenting these feelings of uncertainty, a clandestine monument to Cold War victory sprouts from the north pole ice sheet as if seeded by atomic dust blowing in an Arctic wind—a new border wall that divides safety and danger, known and unknown.

Ice Curtain is a terrestrial telescope through which to peer at the many faces of the prohibited. Rare visitors who actually find this monument stare through the thin veils of dry ice, deep past the murky sheets of the Cold War's walls, to look upon a terrain of classified intelligence. Beyond these numb distortions what one might get is a fleeting breath of a secret history. Ice Curtain is a meditative encounter with the truths and non-truths buried in the Cold War's marbled obscurity. This icebound barricade is a symbolic looking glass into the refractory clandestine afar—meant to ponder the spatial opacity of the Cold War's political wake, still unfurling its infrastructure of smoke and mirrors today, still haunting from its historic precipice.

Somewhere on a tenuously-determined continental edge, quietly in danger from the legacies of global climate change, cast in the sights of private satellites monitoring ongoing border conflicts where the Cold War, in fact, is still fought, a longitudinal sinew unravels as a walkable panoramic looking glass to gaze at the Cold War's persistent black-sited history, framed in the architecture of a classic separation barrier. Upon this surface, solid yet unstable—obstinate but in constant motion—pale imaginaries of these secret histories are conjured in a new scopic regime forged within this glass wall's frozen gaze. The monument acts as both mirror and archive where all covertness of the Cold War will be melted down into a single pool of memory, once climate change and geopolitical conflict drags the Ice Curtain down.

Water and ice here symbolize the veils of secrecy and the liquidity of truth that we must wade through to find clarity in this spectral past, to capture traces of the unseen as they can be reduced to a new surface, and brought to light over the glacial purity of the whitest landscape. Ice Curtain glimpses and traces the government's shadowy covert landscape frozen in time, where the Cold War's victory remains lodged as a neverending wager over a black and white world.

The melting of the wall dissolves the nature of this secrecy, unmoors its trapped truths, and returns the border to lucid amorphousness. Somewhere squirming towards a level surface, sonic ice worms of the clandestine's echo resound in a warning siren played from an apex where no one can hear, until all is made water again.